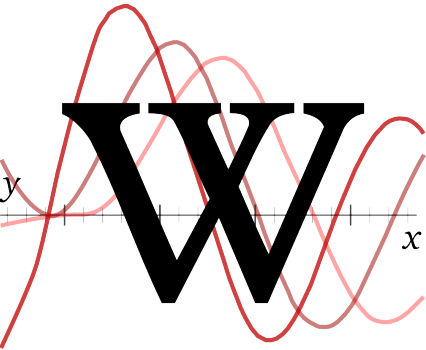
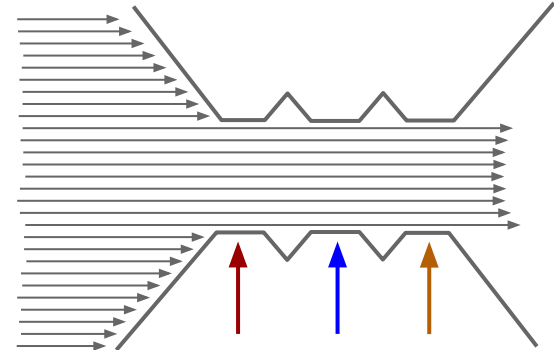


visual editor's effect

on newly registered users



Aaron Halfaker
ahalfaker@wikimedia.org
[[User:EpochFail]]
[[User:Halfak (WMF)]]



The decline in new contributor growth is the single most serious challenge facing the Wikimedia movement.

Removing avoidable technical impediments associated with Wikimedia's editing interface is a necessary pre-condition for increasing the number of Wikimedia contributors.

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technical
impediments

[[User:Guillom]]

A portrait of a man with short dark hair and a serious expression, wearing a dark blue polo shirt. He is standing against a plain, light-colored wall.

technical
impediments

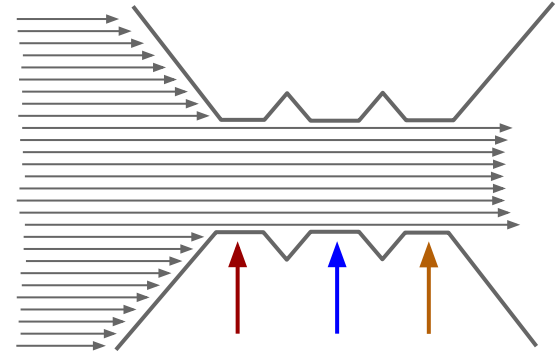
[[User:Guillom]]

A portrait of a man with short brown hair, glasses, and a beard, smiling. He is wearing a maroon t-shirt and blue jeans. He is standing in what appears to be a workshop or office environment with a desk and equipment visible in the background.

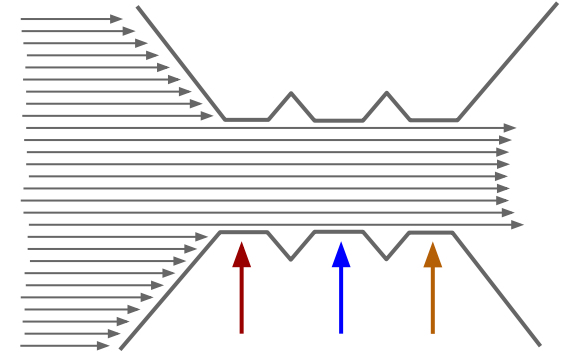
entry
barriers

[[User:EpochFail]]

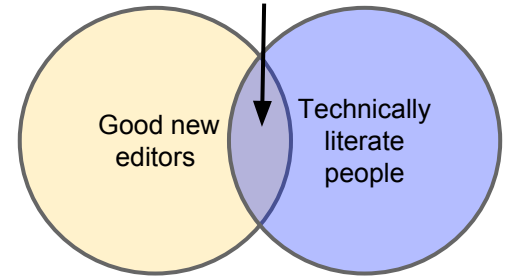
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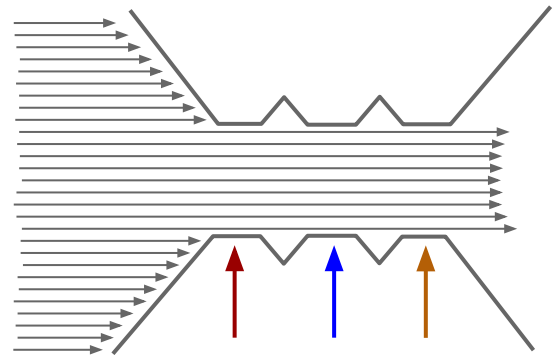
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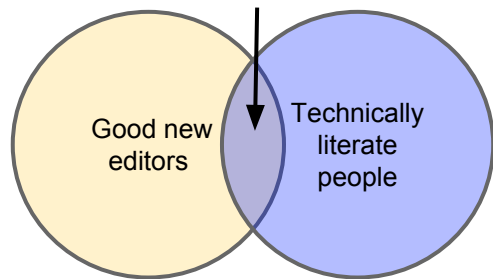
2. VisualEditor & technical literacy



1. Entry barriers

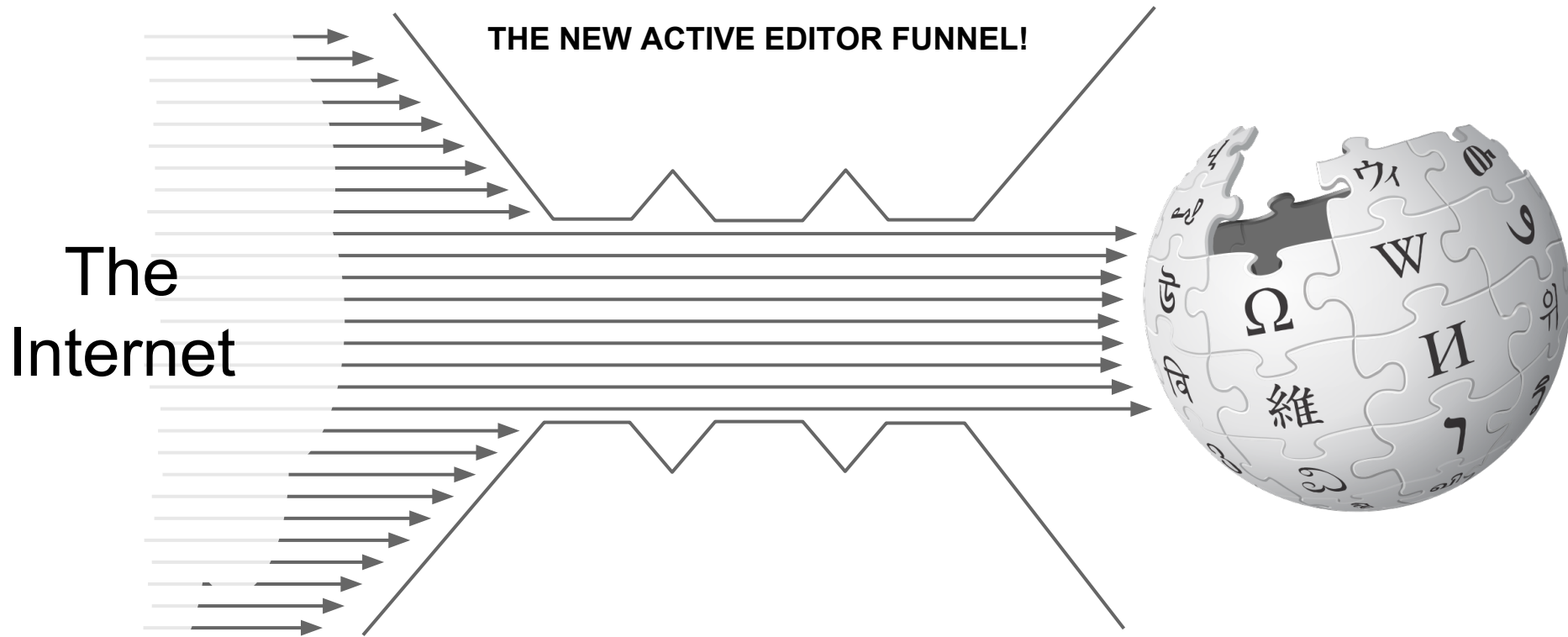


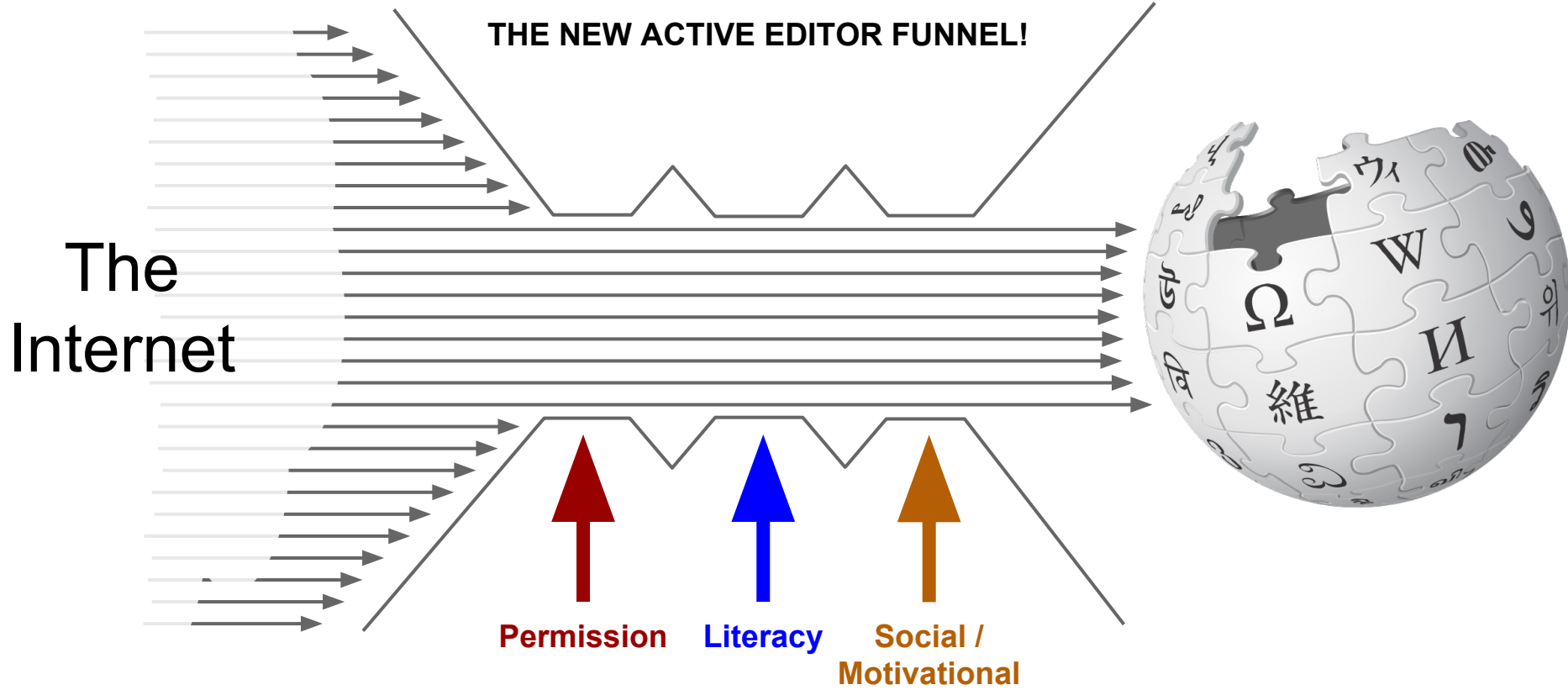
2. VisualEditor & technical literacy



3. Experimental results & discussion

Part 1. Entry barriers





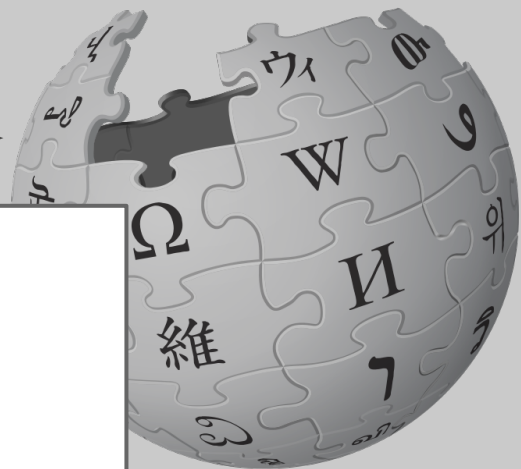


The
Internet

THE NEW ACTIVE EDITOR FUNNEL!

Permission

- Anyone can edit

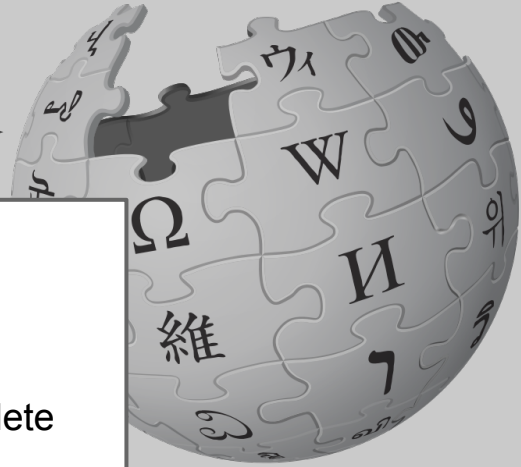


The
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Permission

- Anyone can edit
- Only trusted users can delete



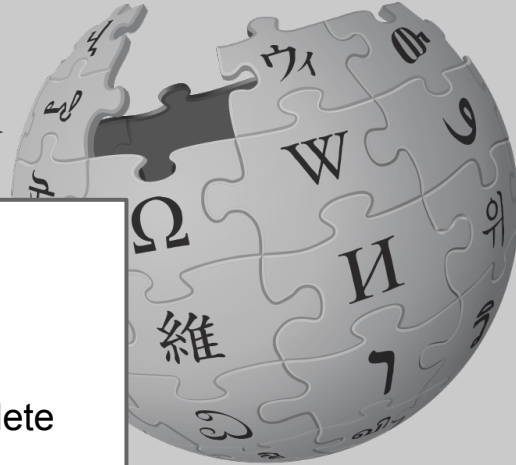
The
Internet

THE NEW ACTIVE EDITOR FUNNEL!

- Anyone can edit
- Only trusted users can delete

Generally not an issue for newcomers

Permission



The
Internet

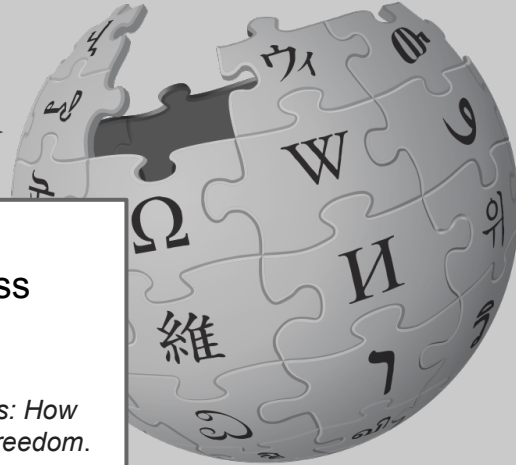
THE NEW ACTIVE EDITOR FUNNEL!



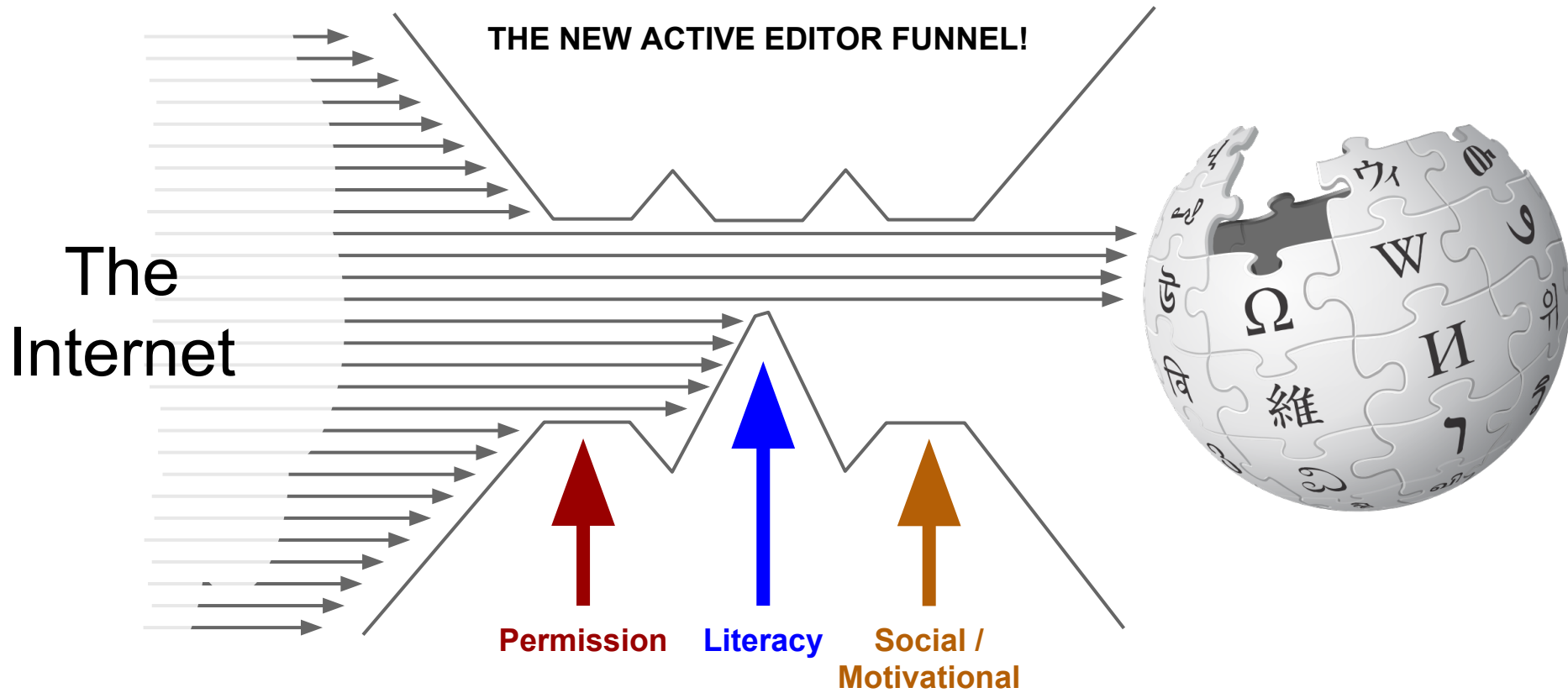
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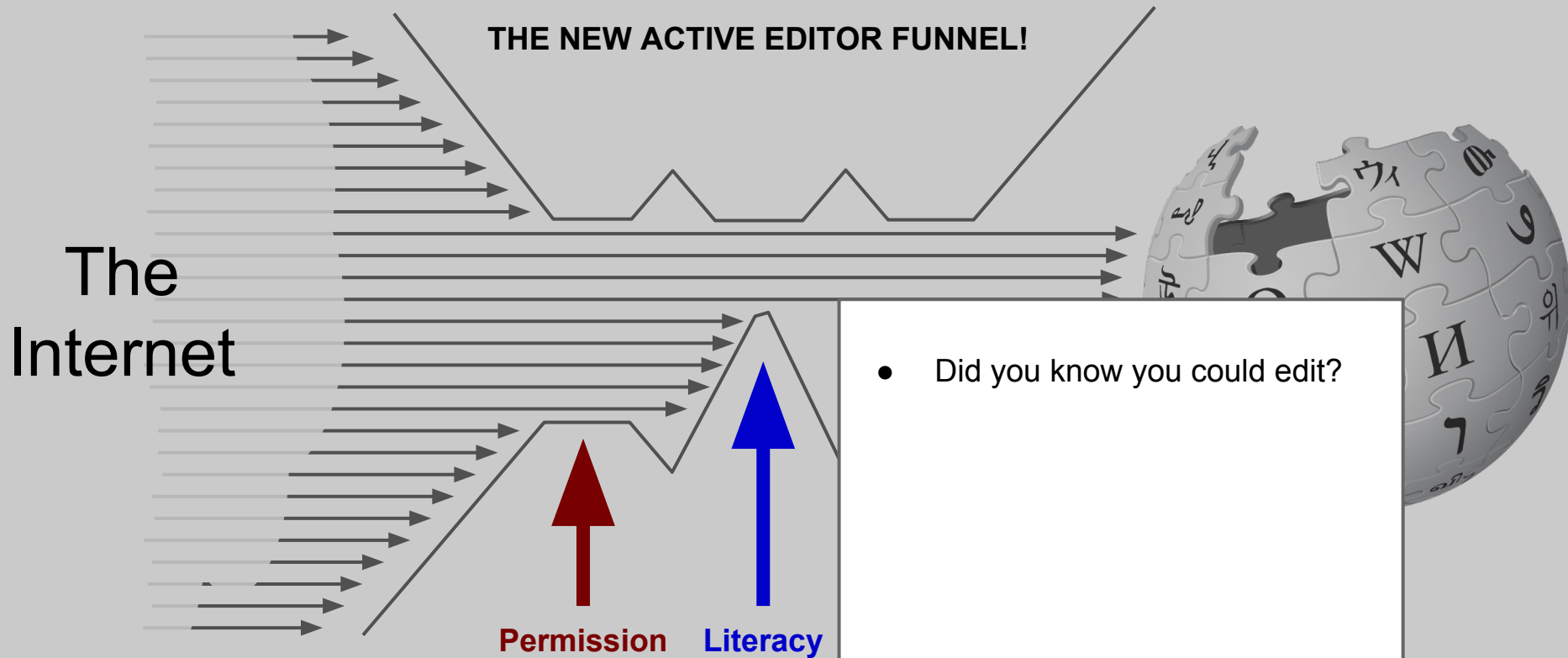
A key to Wikipedia's success

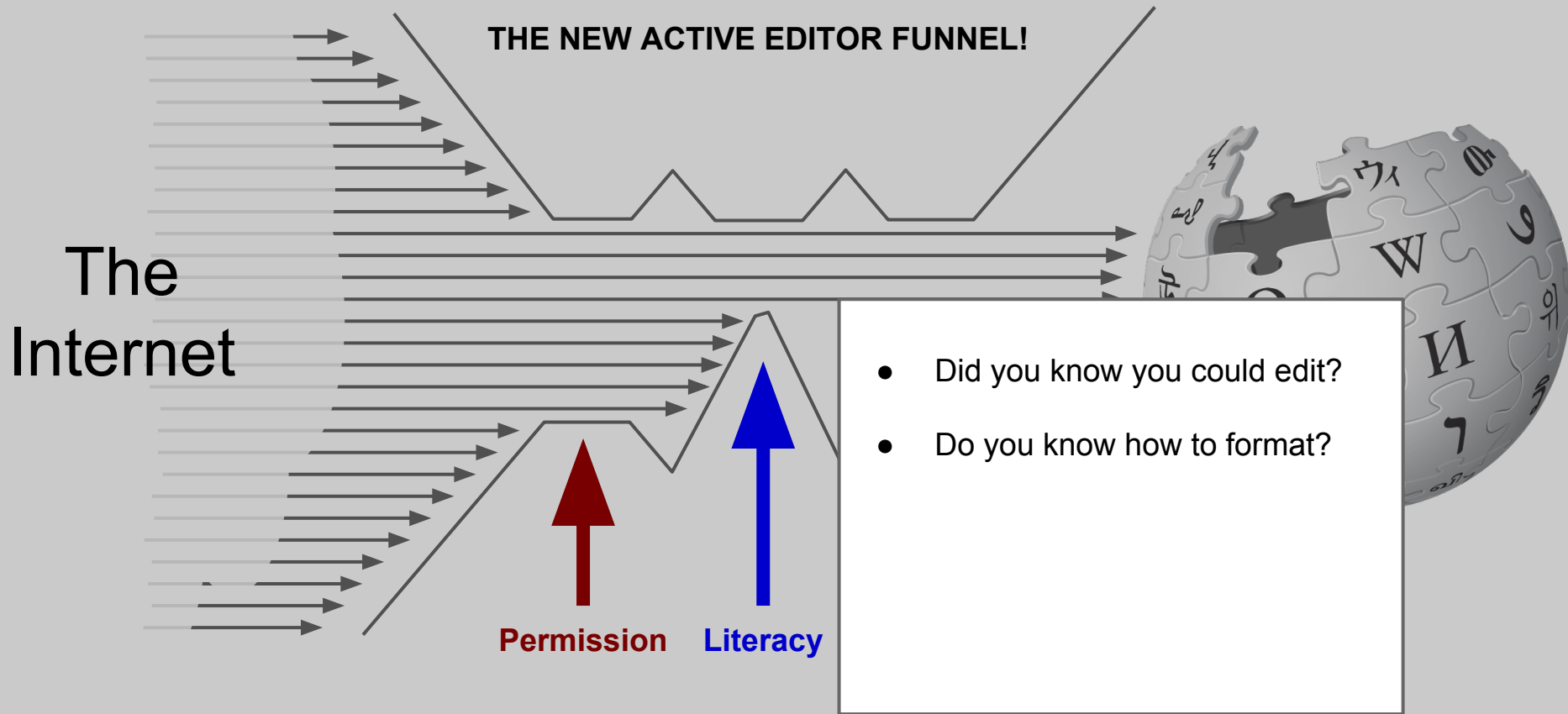
Benkler, Y. (2006). *The wealth of networks: How social production transforms markets and freedom*.
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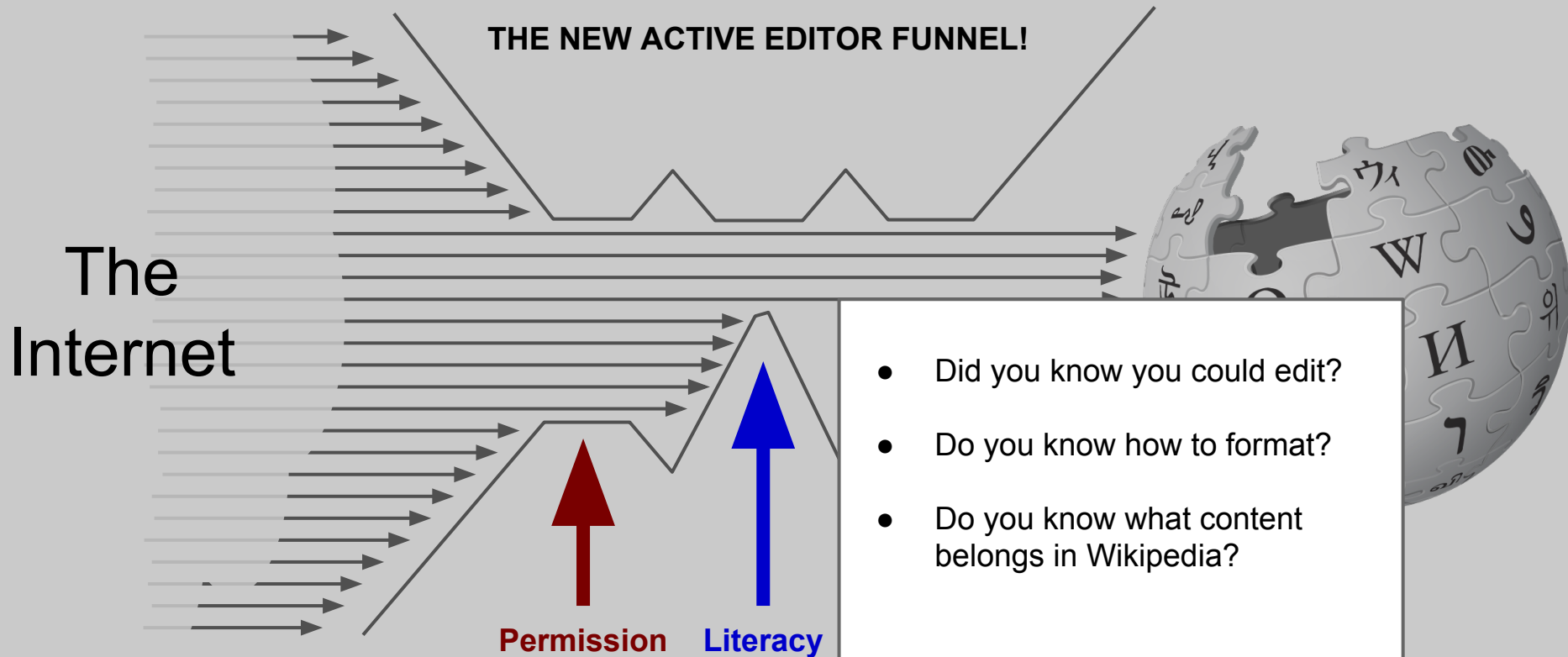






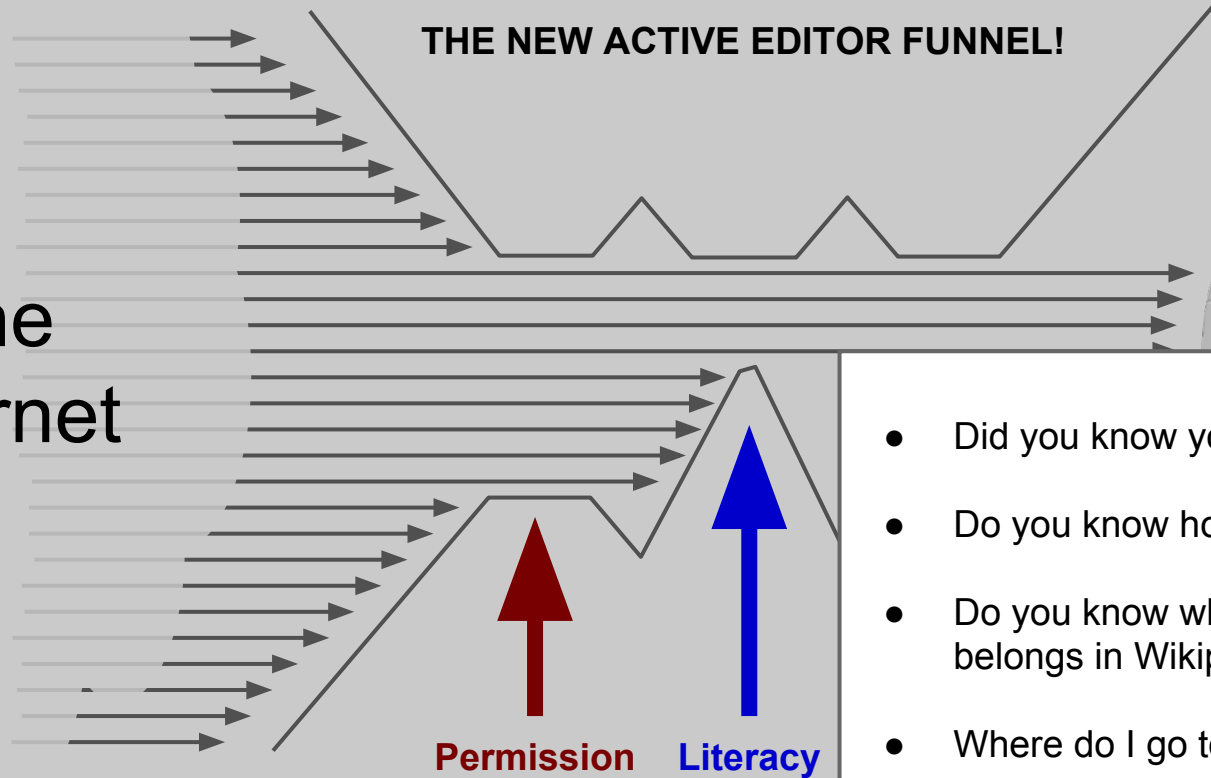




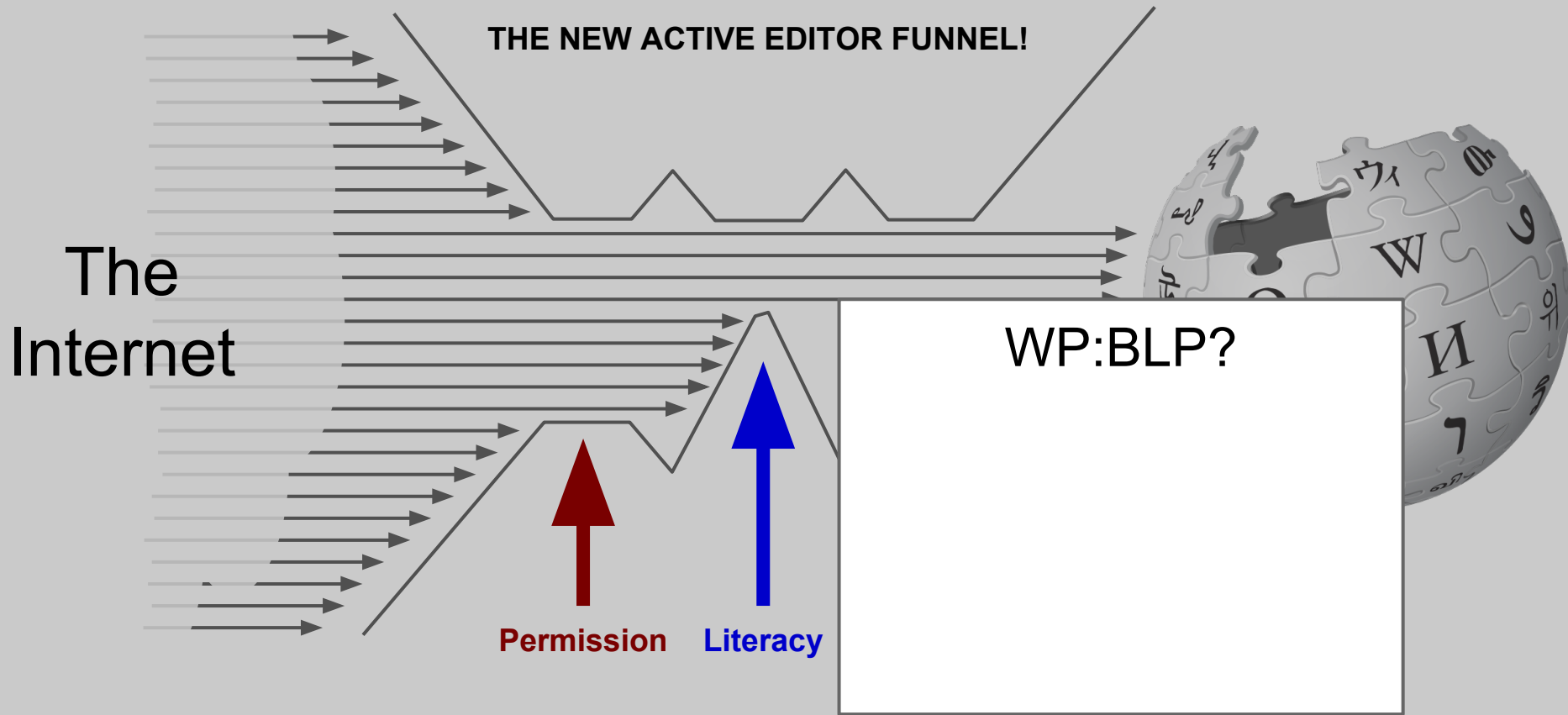


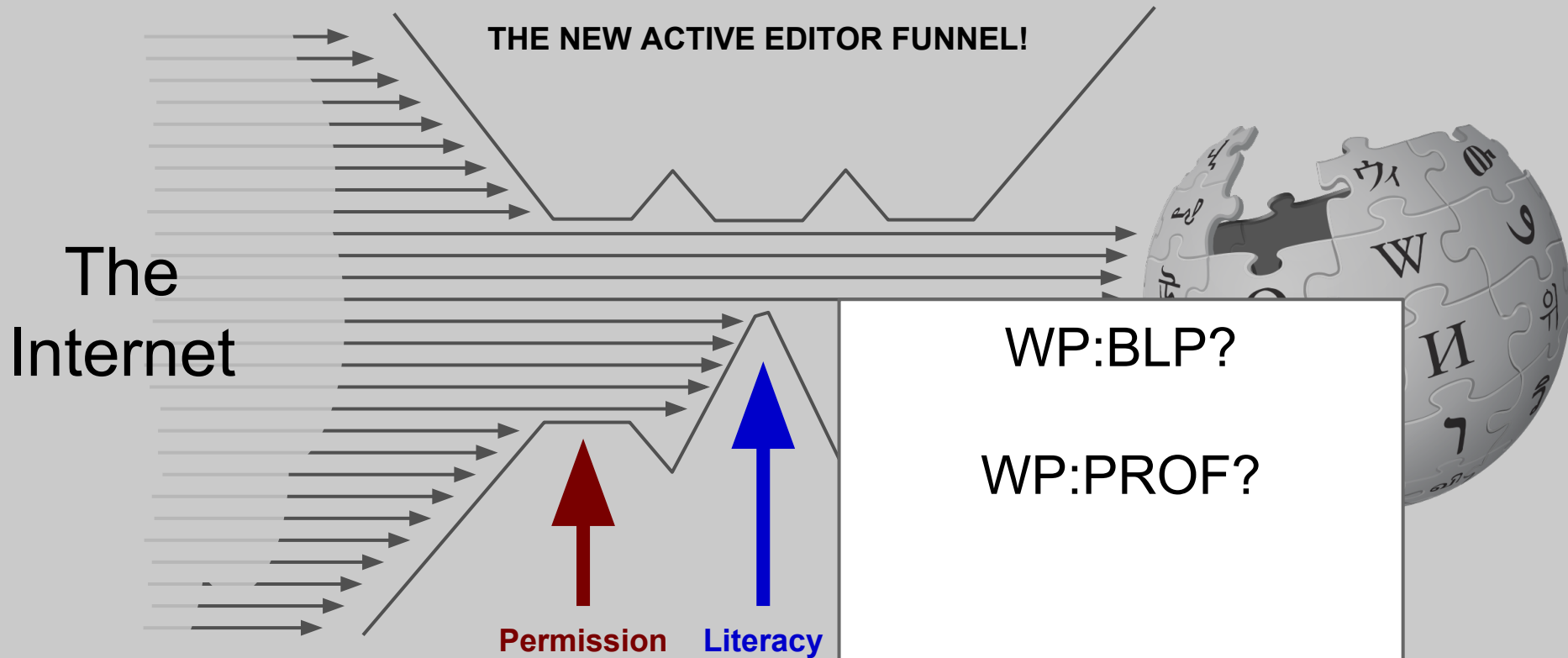
The
Internet

THE NEW ACTIVE EDITOR FUNNEL!



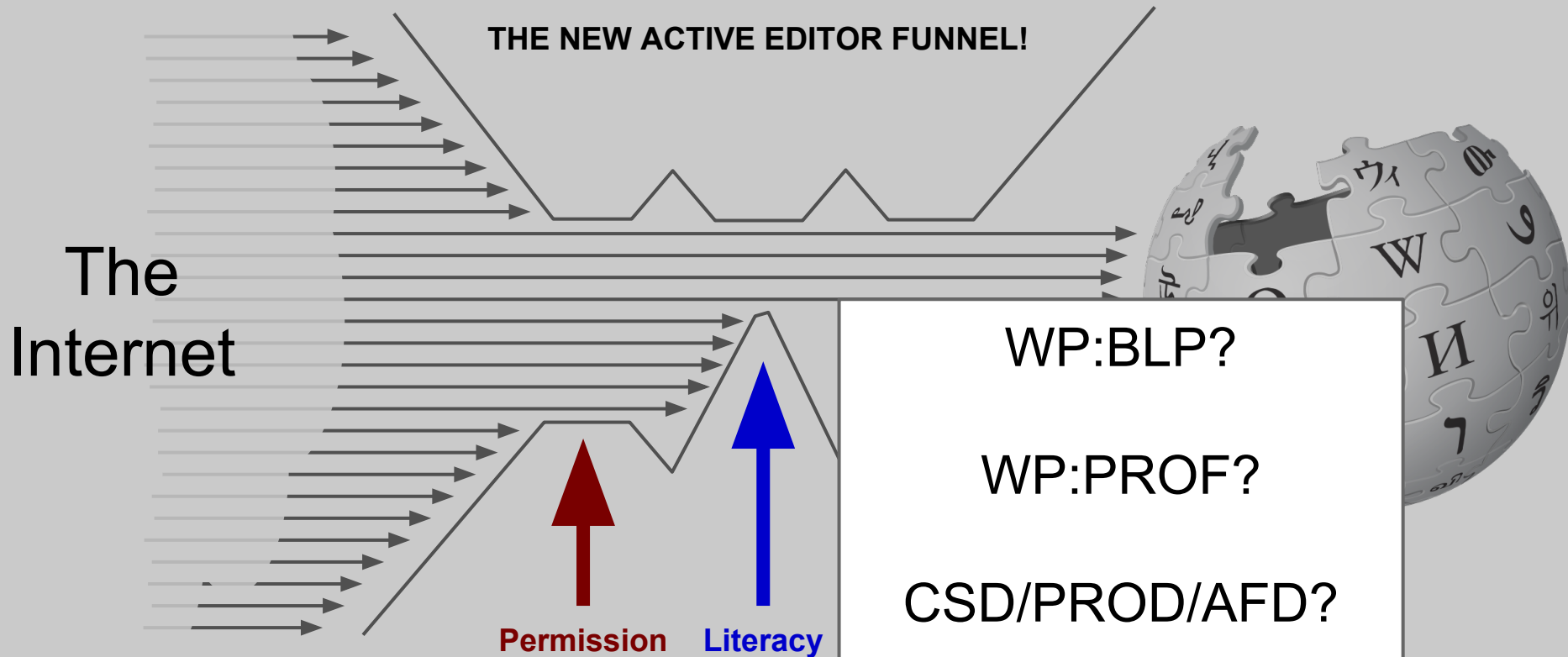
- Did you know you could edit?
- Do you know how to format?
- Do you know what content belongs in Wikipedia?
- Where do I go to ... ?





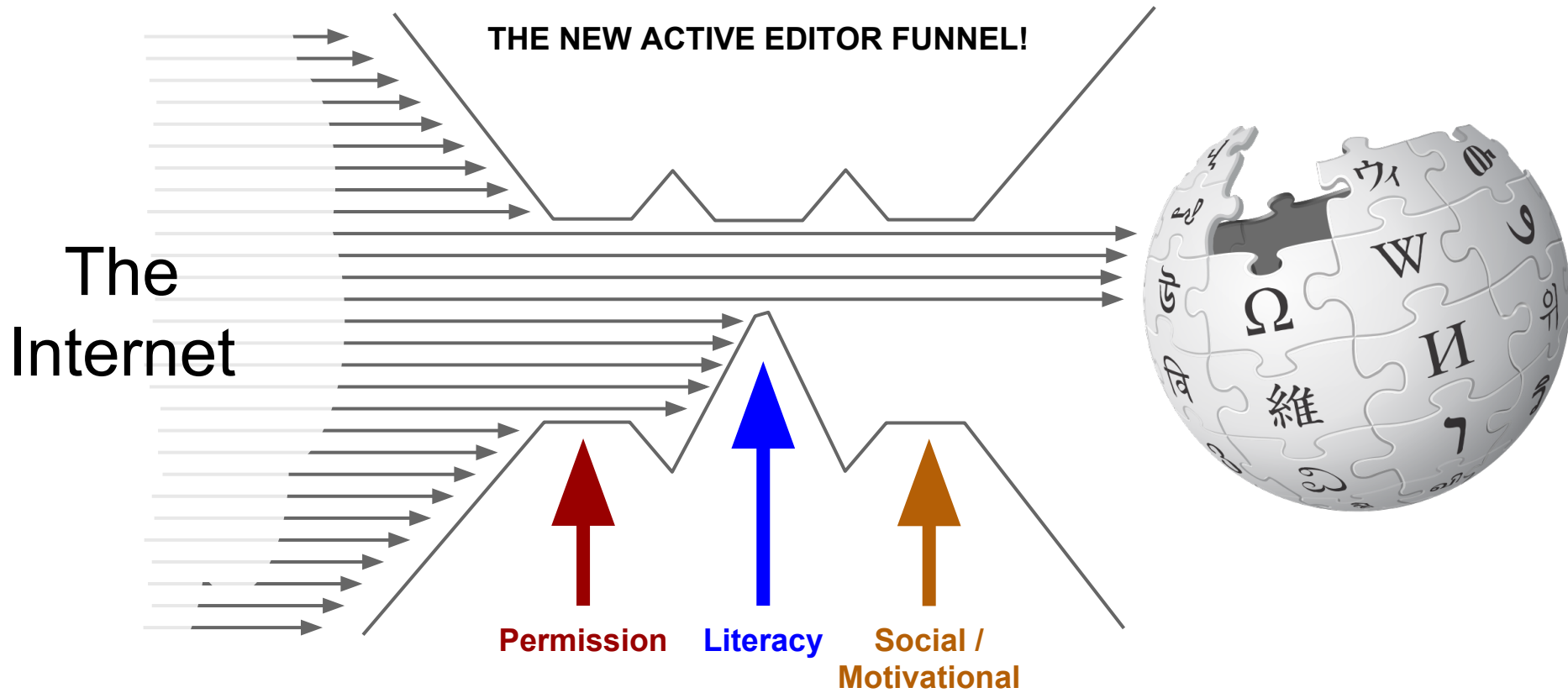
Ford, H., & Geiger, R. S. (2012, August). Writing up rather than writing down: Becoming Wikipedia literate. In *Proceedings of the Eighth Annual International Symposium on Wikis and Open Collaboration* (p. 16). ACM.

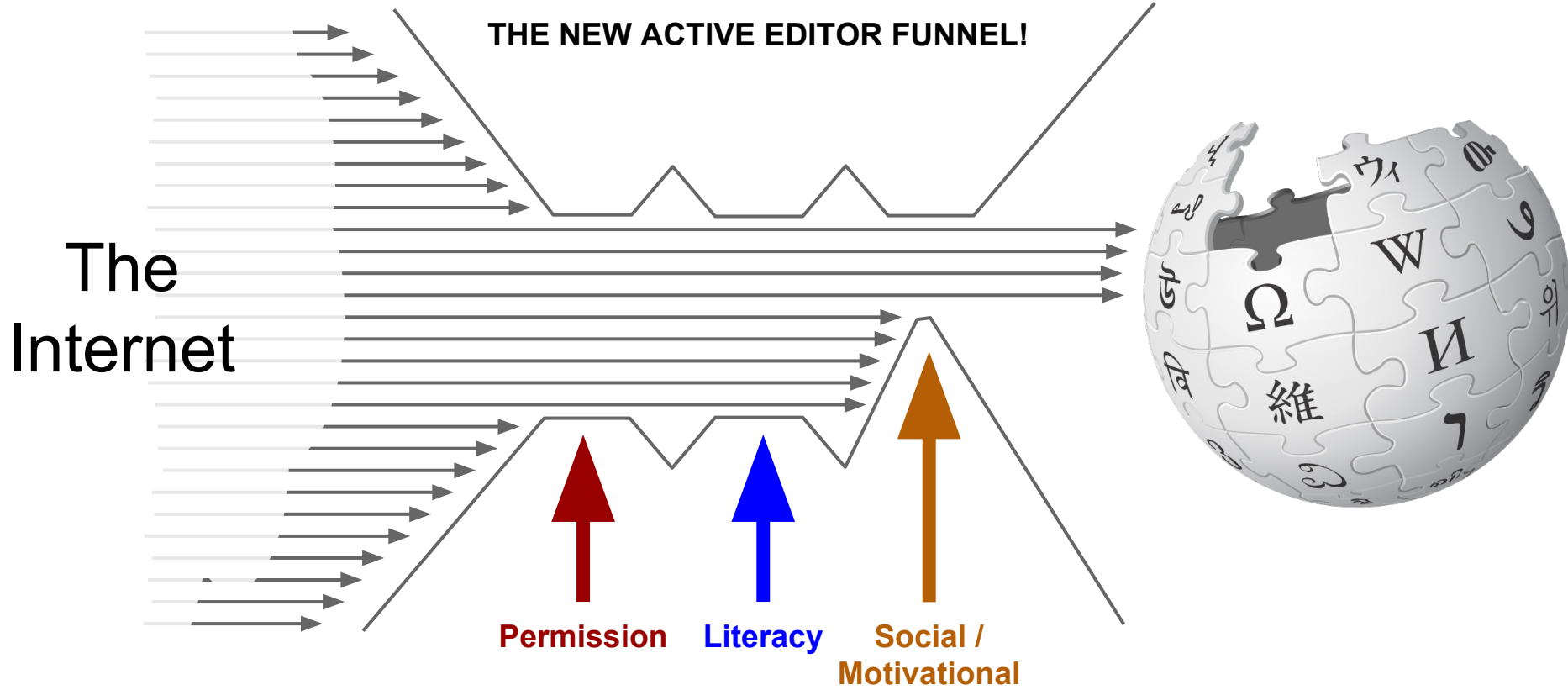
Beschastnikh, I., Kriplean, T., & McDonald, D. W. (2008, March). Wikipedia Self-Governance in Action: Motivating the Policy Lens. In *ICWSM*.



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Beschastnikh, I., Kriplean, T., & McDonald, D. W. (2008, March). Wikipedia Self-Governance in Action: Motivating the Policy Lens. In *ICWSM*.





The
Internet

THE NEW ACTIVE EDITOR FUNNEL!

- Did you make friends?

Social /
Motivational

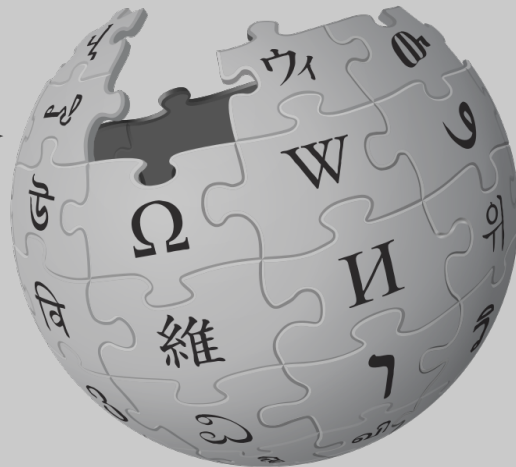


The
Internet

THE NEW ACTIVE EDITOR FUNNEL!

- Did you make friends?
- Do you find the work rewarding?

**Social /
Motivational**



The
Internet

THE NEW ACTIVE EDITOR FUNNEL!

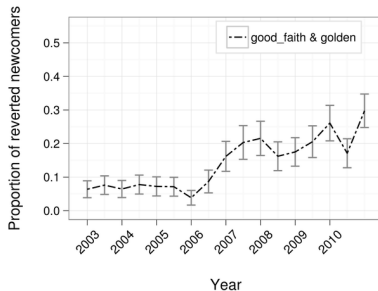
- Did you make friends?
- Do you find the work rewarding?
- Do you identify with the community?

**Social /
Motivational**



The Internet

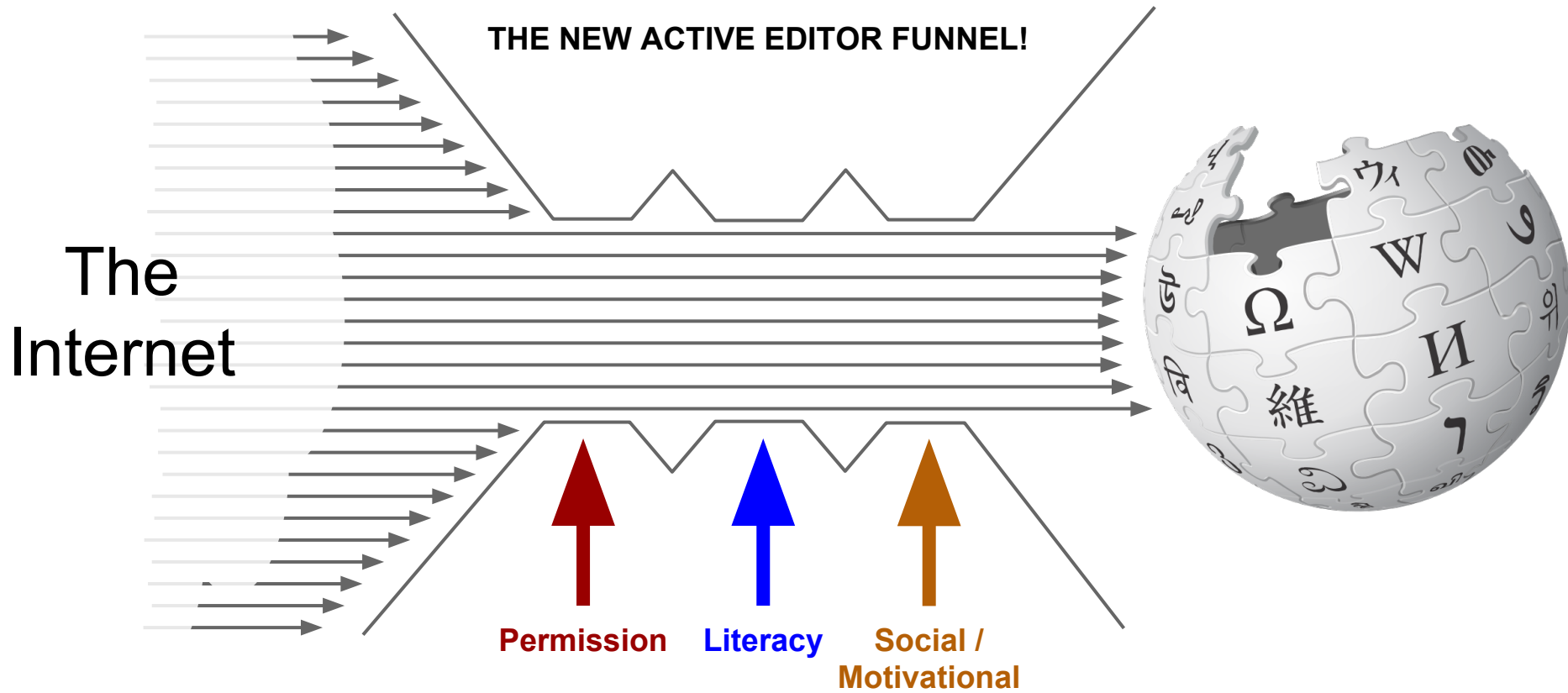
THE NEW ACTIVE EDITOR FUNNEL!



[[[:m:Research:The Rise and Decline]]

**Social /
Motivational**





Part 2. VisualEditor & technical literacy

WikiText is hard
for newbies



The decline in new contributor growth is the single most serious challenge facing the Wikimedia movement.

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- Reduce technical impediments

visual editor

- Reduce technical impediments

WYSIWYG

visual editor

- Reduce technical impediments

WYSIWYG
“Wissy Wig”



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wigs_and_hair_colour.jpg CC-BY-SA 2.0

What

You

See

Is

What

You

Get

What
You
See
Is
What
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Get





WikiText

Editing Biology

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Biology deals with the study of the many living organisms.
(top: *E. coli* bacteria and gazelle)
(bottom: GoLiath beetle and tree fern)

What
You
See
Is
What
You
Get





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(bottom: GoLiath beetle and tree fern)

What you see is a bunch of “markup”
What you get is a Wikipedia article.

What
You
See
Is
What
You
Get

WikiText

Visual Editor

Editing Biology

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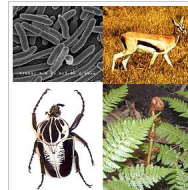
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WikiText

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Significant technical literacy
barrier





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Significant technical literacy barrier

- What's a template?
- How do I bold?
- How do I split one paragraph into two?
- How do I add a citation?
- What is this nonsense?: "{|", "|-", "|}", etc.?

Minimized technical literacy barrier



Visual Editor

← → Paragraph ▾ A ↻ ↺ Cite ≡ Insert ▾ □ ▢ Ω ⓘ ⚠ ≡ Save page

Biology

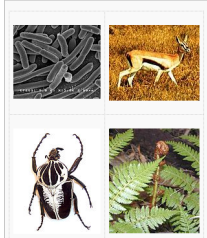
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+ Insert paragraph

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For other uses, see [Biology \(disambiguation\)](#).

Biology is a *natural science* concerned with the study of **life** and living **organisms**, including their structure, function, growth, **evolution**, distribution, and **taxonomy**.^[1] Modern biology is a vast and eclectic field, composed of many **branches** and **subdisciplines**. However, despite the broad scope of biology, there are certain general and unifying concepts within it that govern all study and research, consolidating it into single, coherent fields. In general, biology recognizes the **cell** as the basic unit of life, **genes** as the basic unit of **heredity**, and **evolution** as the engine that propels the synthesis and creation of new **species**. It is also understood today that all organisms survive by consuming and transforming **energy** and by **regulating** their internal environment to maintain a stable and vital condition.

Subdisciplines of biology are defined by the scale at which organisms are studied, the kinds of organisms studied, and the methods used to study them: **biochemistry** examines the rudimentary chemistry of life; **molecular biology** studies the complex interactions among biological **molecules**; **botany** studies the biology of plants; **cellular biology** examines the basic building-block of all life, the **cell**; **physiology** examines the physical and chemical functions of **tissues**, **organs**, and **organ systems** of an organism; **evolutionary biology** examines the processes that produced the diversity of life, and **ecology** examines how organisms interact in their **environment**.^[2]



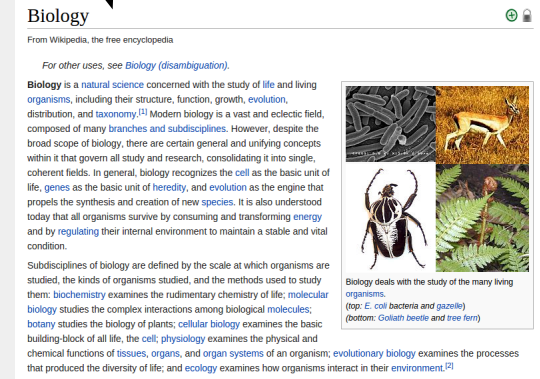
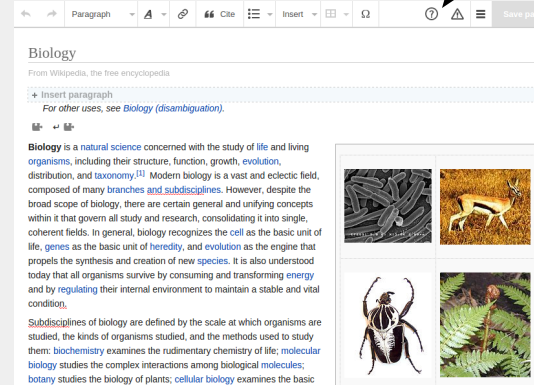
Biology deals with the study of the many living organisms.
(top: *E. coli* bacteria and gazelle)
(bottom: Goliath beetle and tree fern)

1. Familiar experience: Microsoft Word -- Google Docs

Minimized technical literacy barrier



Visual Editor

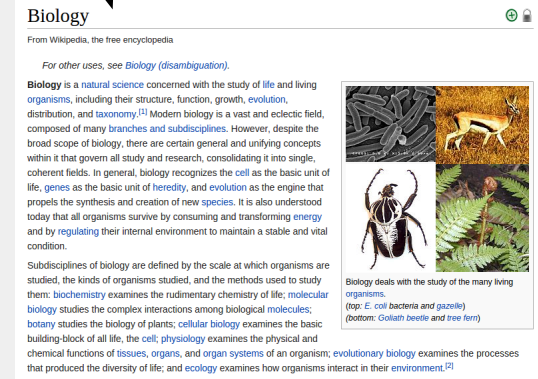
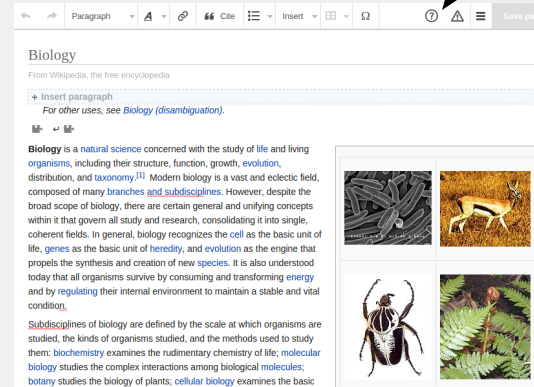


1. Familiar experience: Microsoft Word -- Google Docs
2. Literacy baked into the UI

Minimized technical literacy barrier



Visual Editor

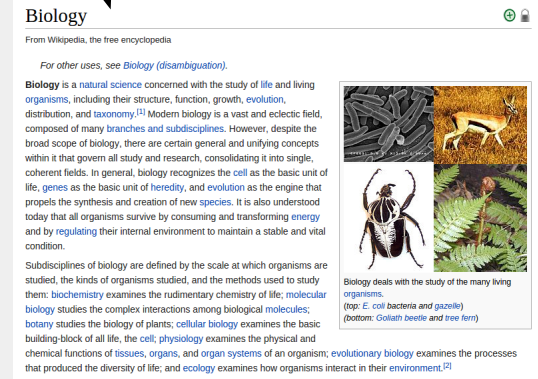
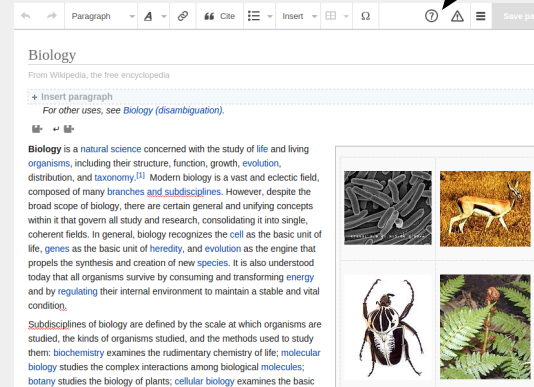


1. Familiar experience: Microsoft Word -- Google Docs
2. Literacy baked into the UI
 - a. How do I add a reference?

Minimized technical literacy barrier

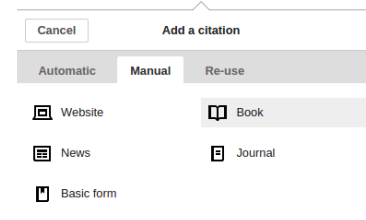


Visual Editor



1. Familiar experience: Microsoft Word -- Google Docs

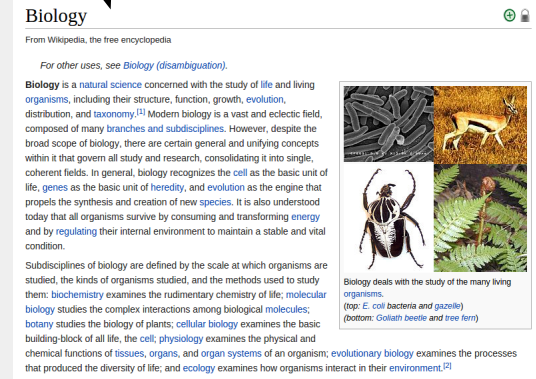
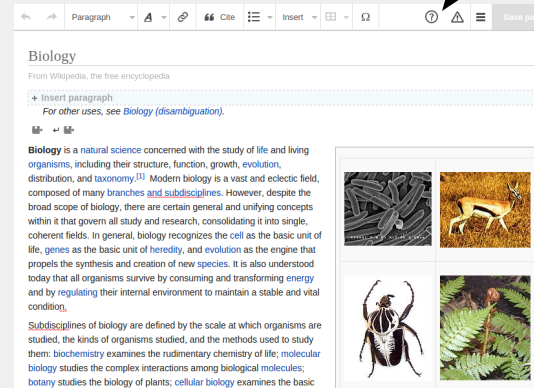
2. Literacy baked into the UI
a. How do I add a reference?

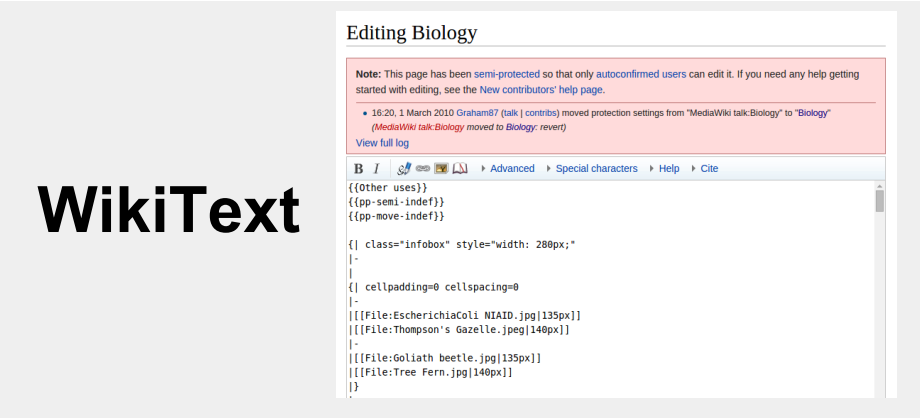


Minimized technical literacy
barrier



Visual
Editor





Note: This page has been *auto-protected* so that only **autoconfirmed users** can edit it. If you need any help getting started with editing, see the **New contributors' help page**.

- 16:20, 1 March 2010 Graham87 ([talk](#) | [contribs](#)) moved protection settings from "MediaWiki talk-Biology" to "Biology" (*MediaWiki talk-Biology* moved to *Biology*: revert)

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> Special characters
> Help
> Cite

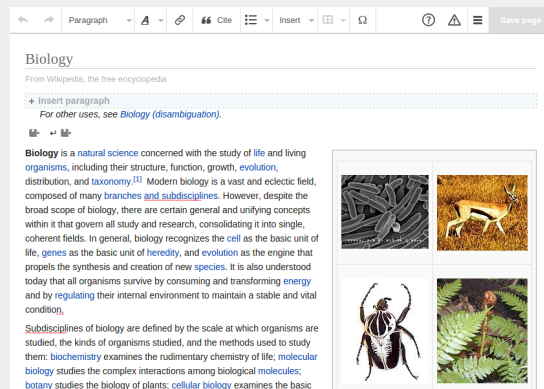
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|[[File:Goliath beetle.jpg|135px]]
|[[File:Tree Fern.jpg|140px]]
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}
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B I [Advanced](#) [Special characters](#) [Help](#) [Cite](#)

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```



**What happens when we give it to
new editors?**

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H1. More of them will contribute productively.

(assumes technical literacy is a limitation)

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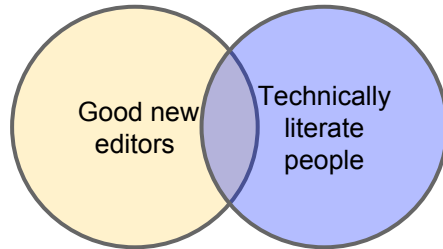
H2. There'll be way more damage!

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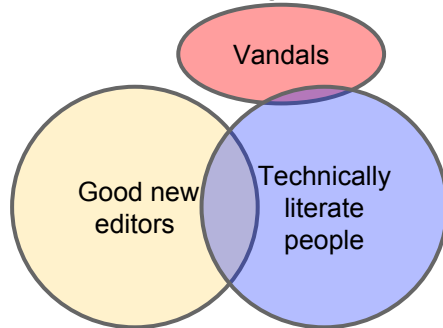


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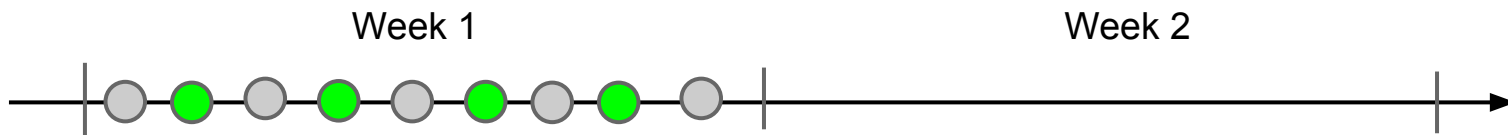


Part 3. Experimental results & discussion

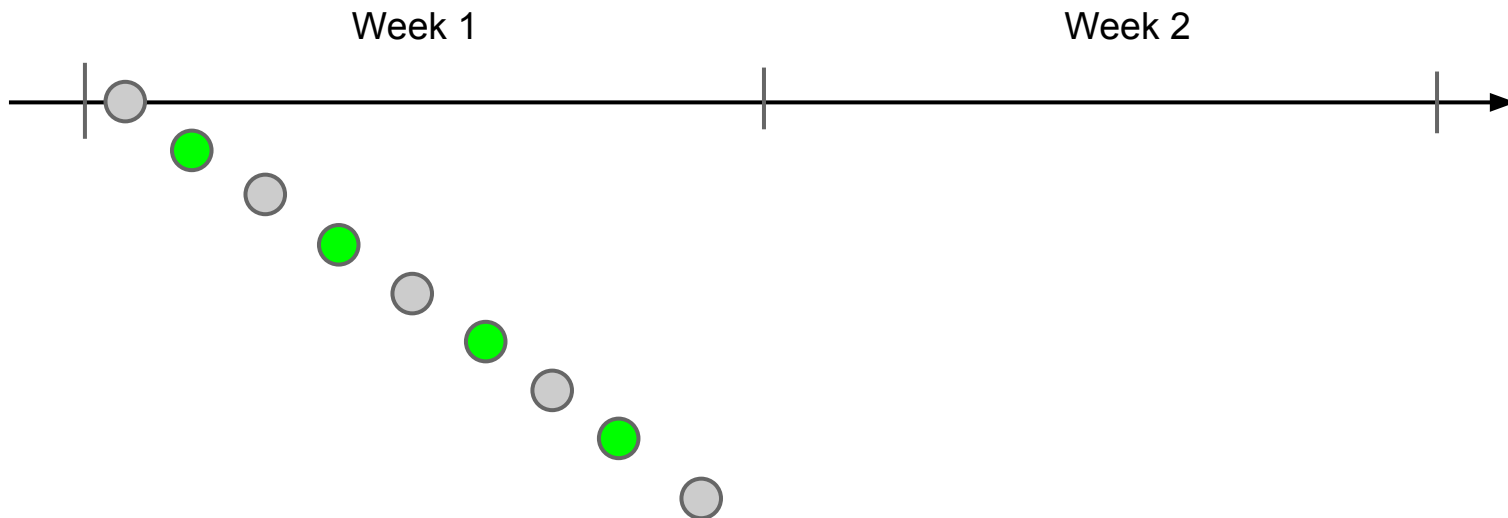
English Wikipedia



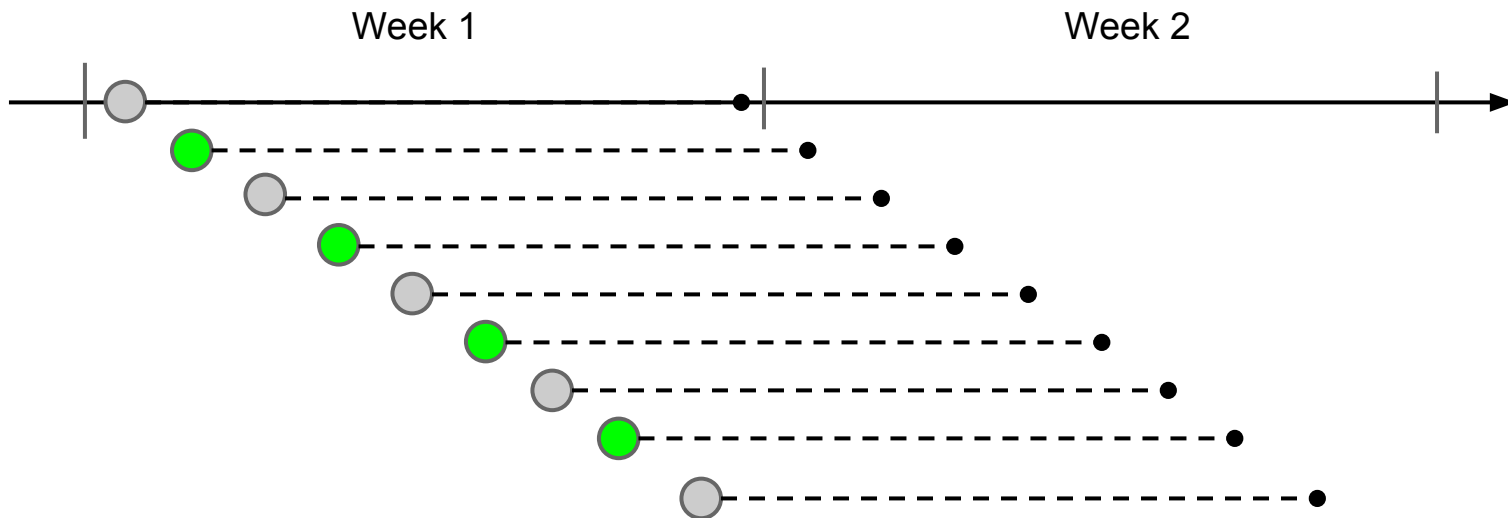
English Wikipedia



English Wikipedia



English Wikipedia



H1. More productive?

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- Productive edits?

H1. More productive?

- Productive edits? *no significance*

H1. More productive?

- Productive edits? *no significance*
- Article edits?

H1. More productive?

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H1. More productive?

- Productive edits? *no significance*
- Article edits? *no significance*
- Editing sessions?

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- Editing sessions? *no significance*
- Time spent editing?

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H1. More productive?

- Productive edits? *no significance*
- Article edits? *no significance*
- Editing sessions? *no significance*
- Time spent editing? *no significance*

No change in productivity.

H2. More damage?

H2. More damage?

- More newcomers blocked for vandalism?

H2. More damage?

- More newcomers blocked for vandalism?
 - Not significant

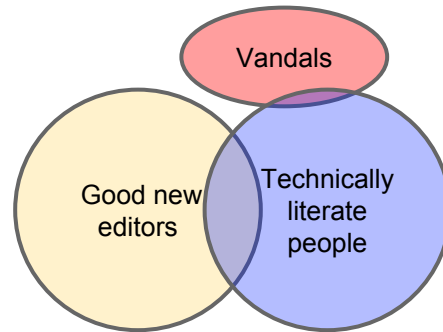
H2. More damage?

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 - Not significant
- Reverted edits?
 - Significantly fewer -- but tiny effect.

H2. More damage?

- More newcomers blocked for vandalism?
 - Not significant
- Reverted edits?
 - Significantly fewer -- but tiny effect.

No change or slight reduction in
damage.

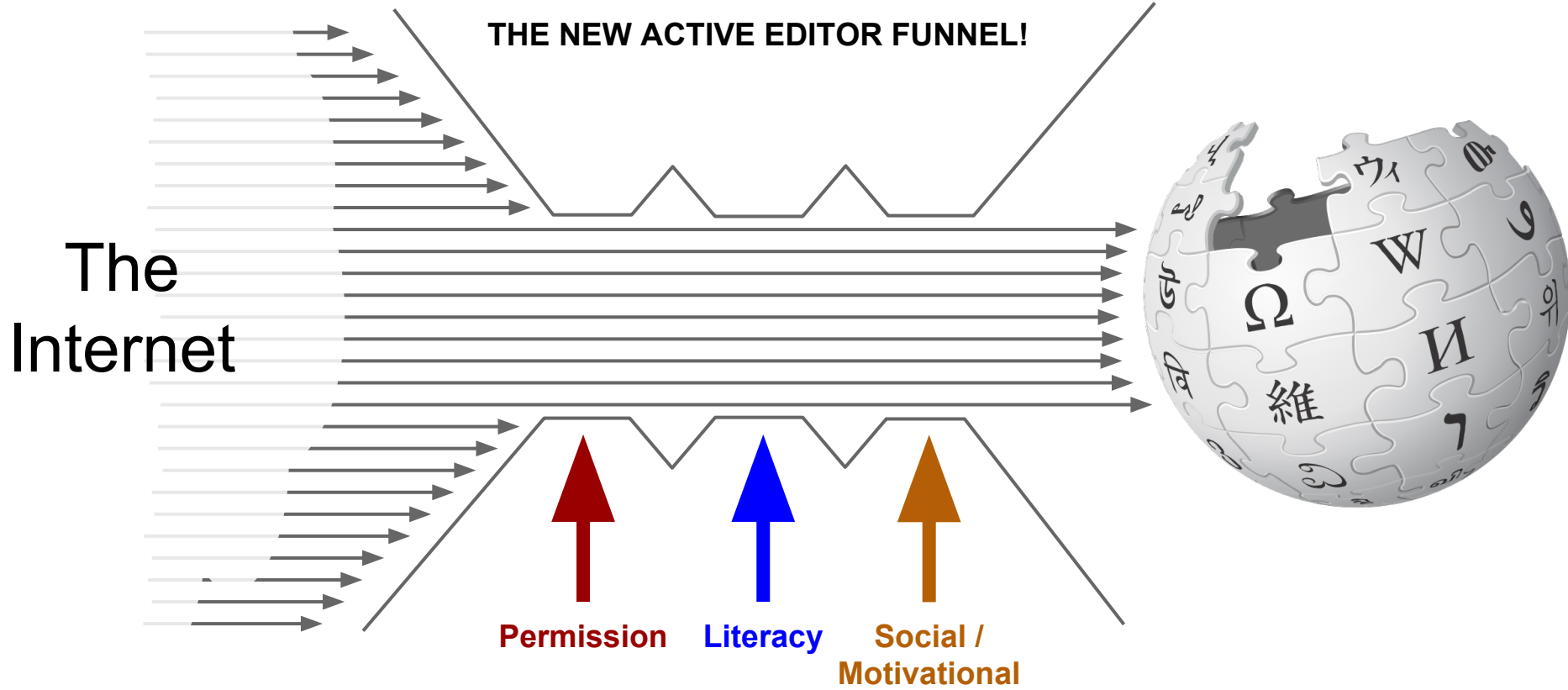


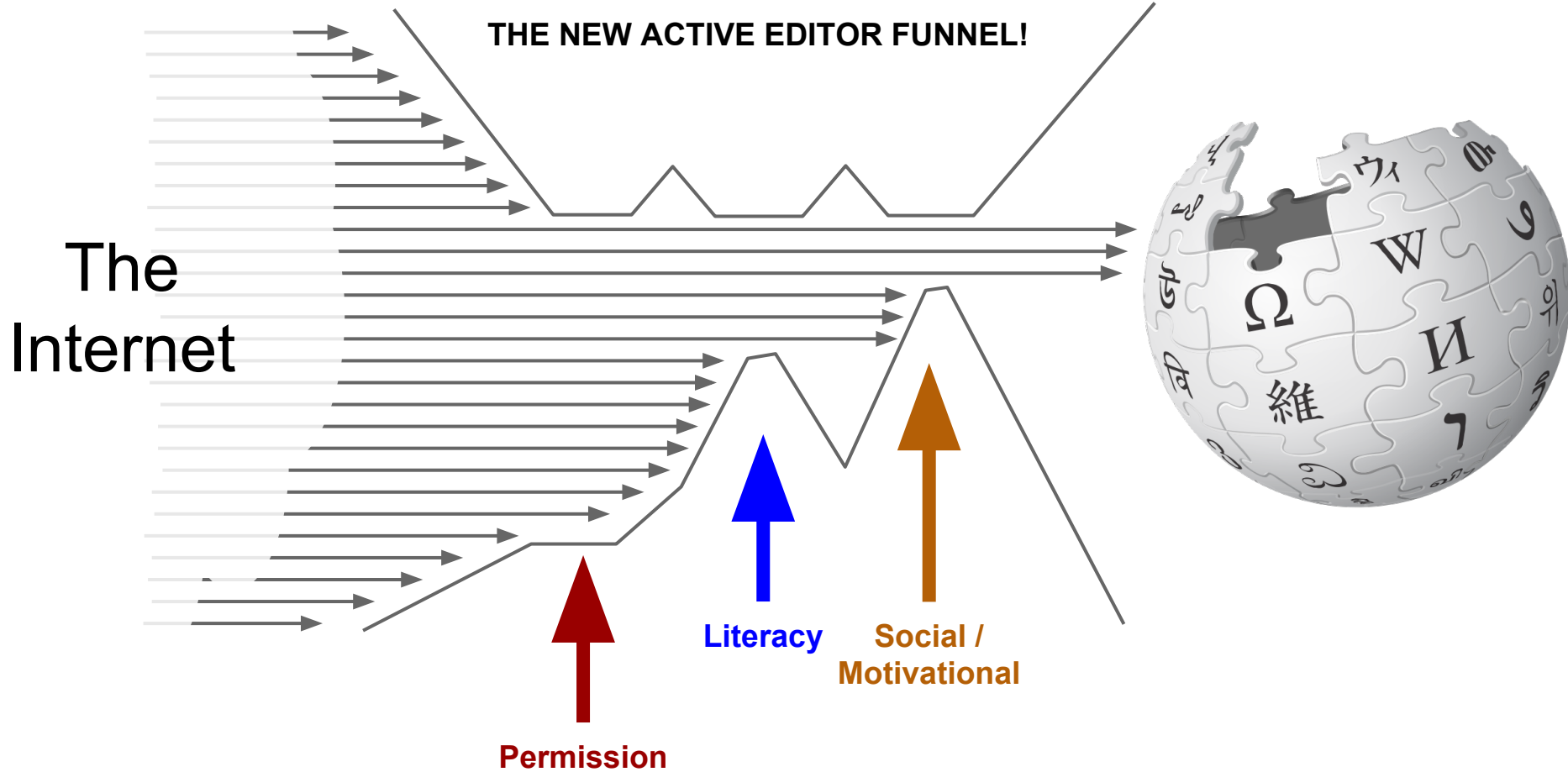


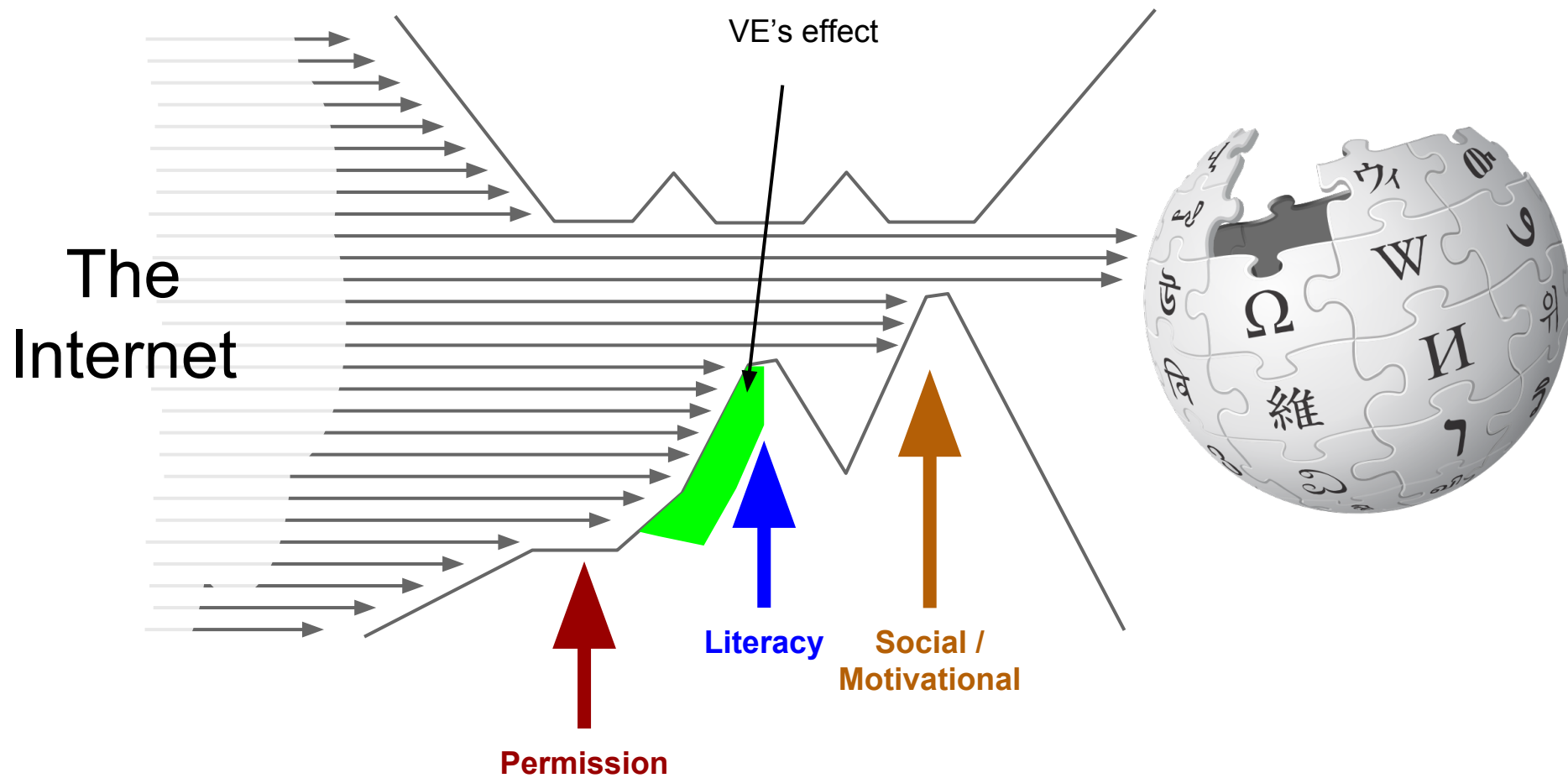
Reducing technical literacy barriers does not seem to make it easier to vandalize Wikipedia.

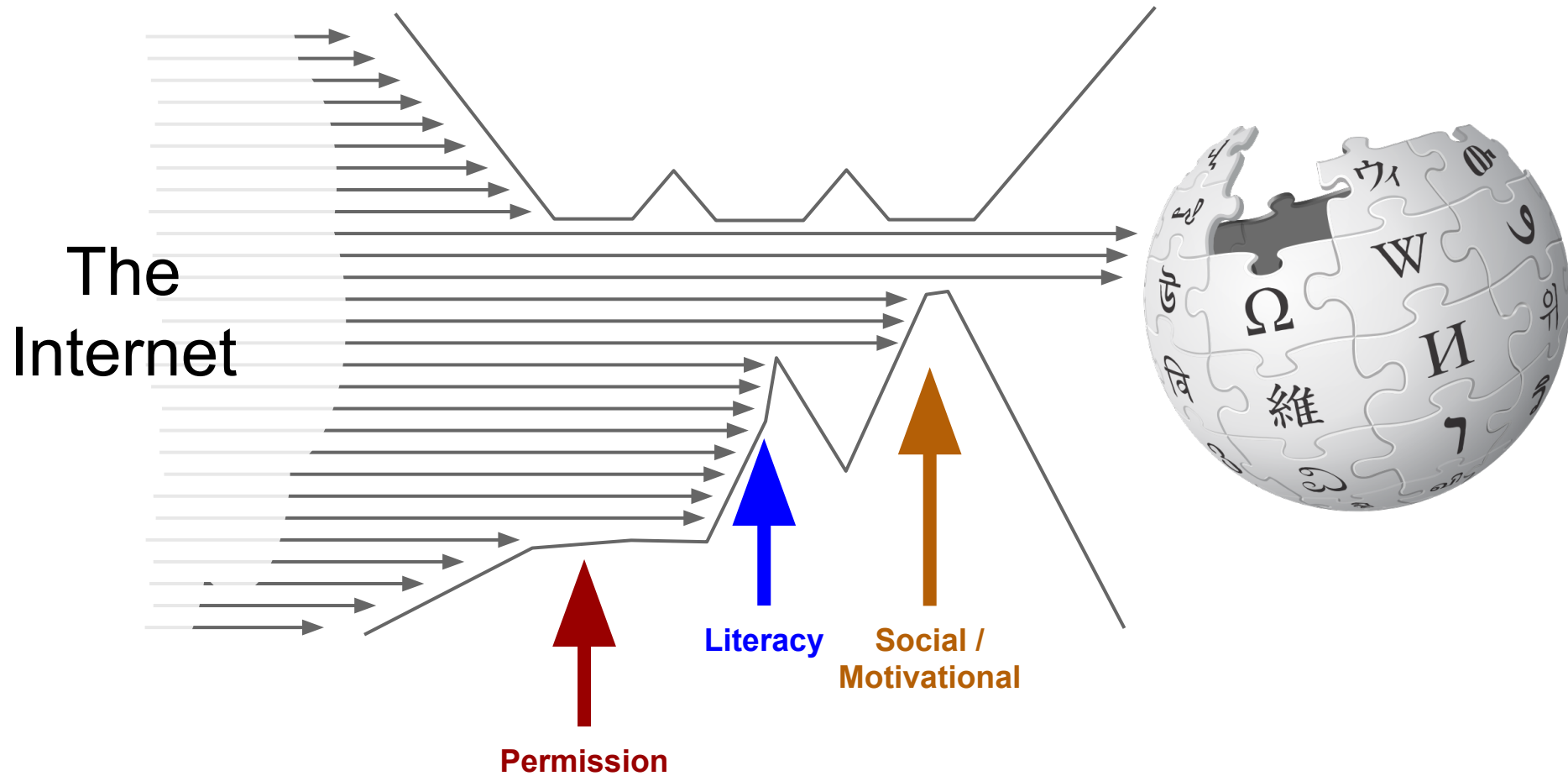
H1. More productive?

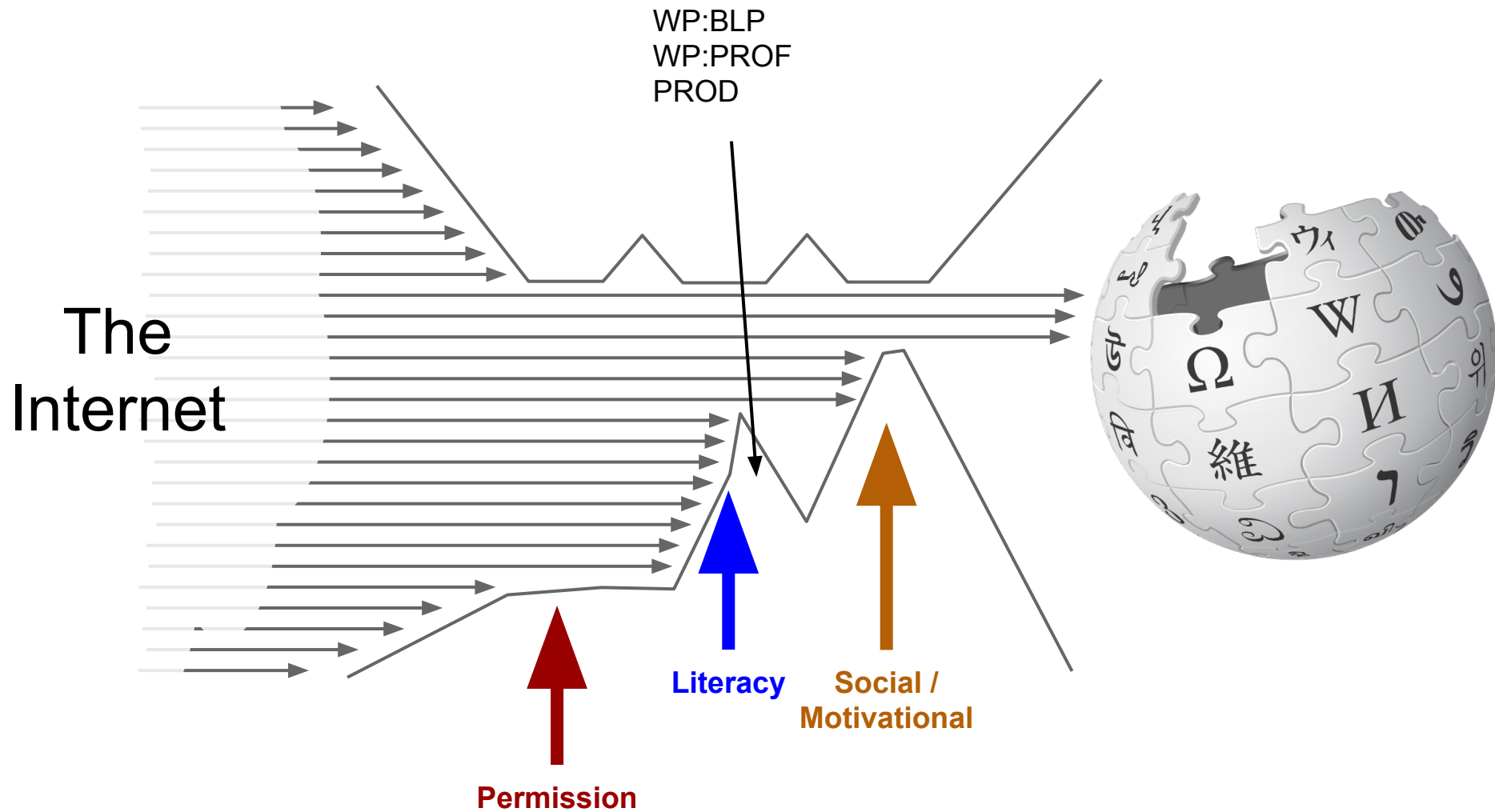
- Why no improvement in productivity?

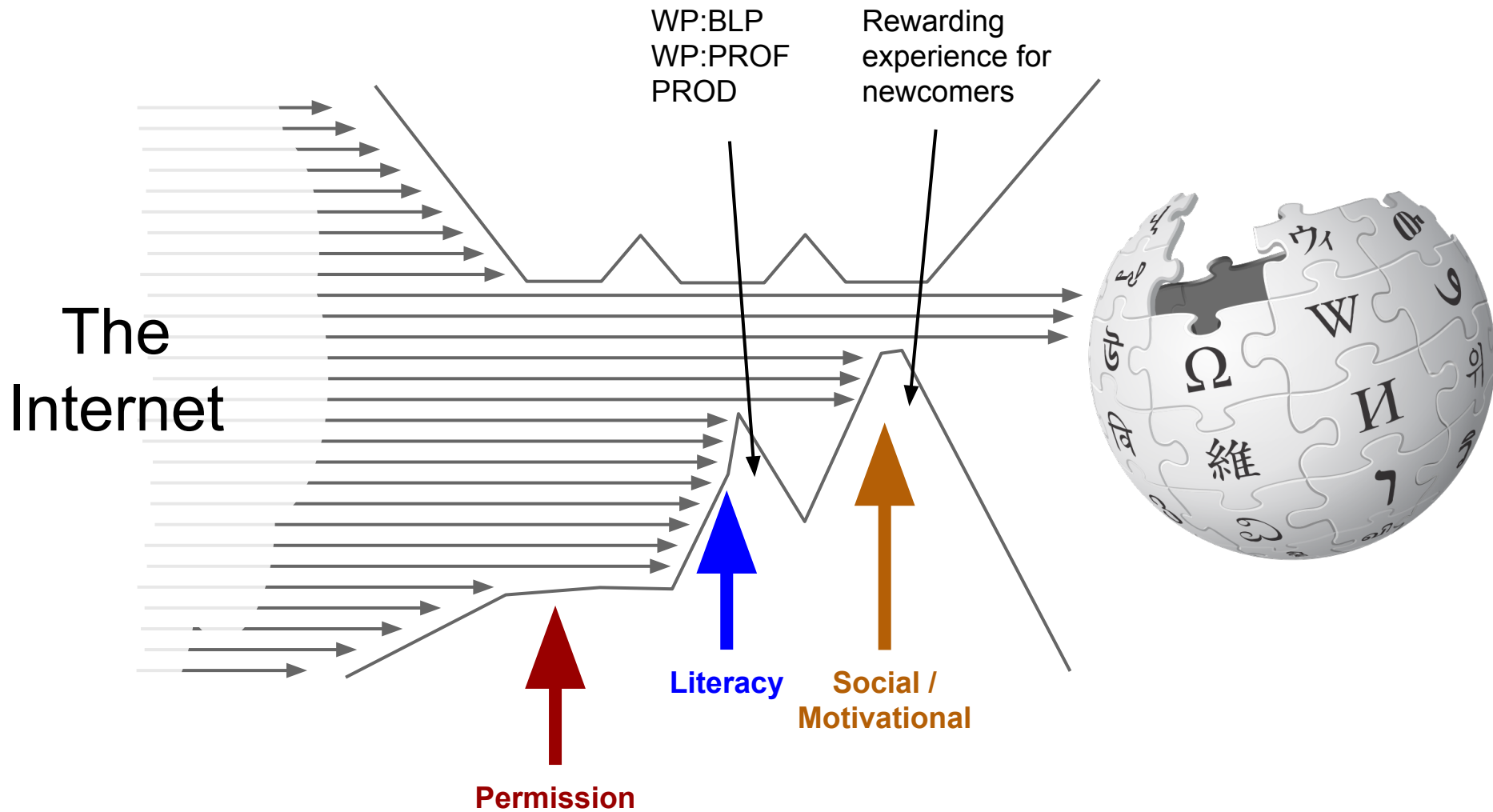


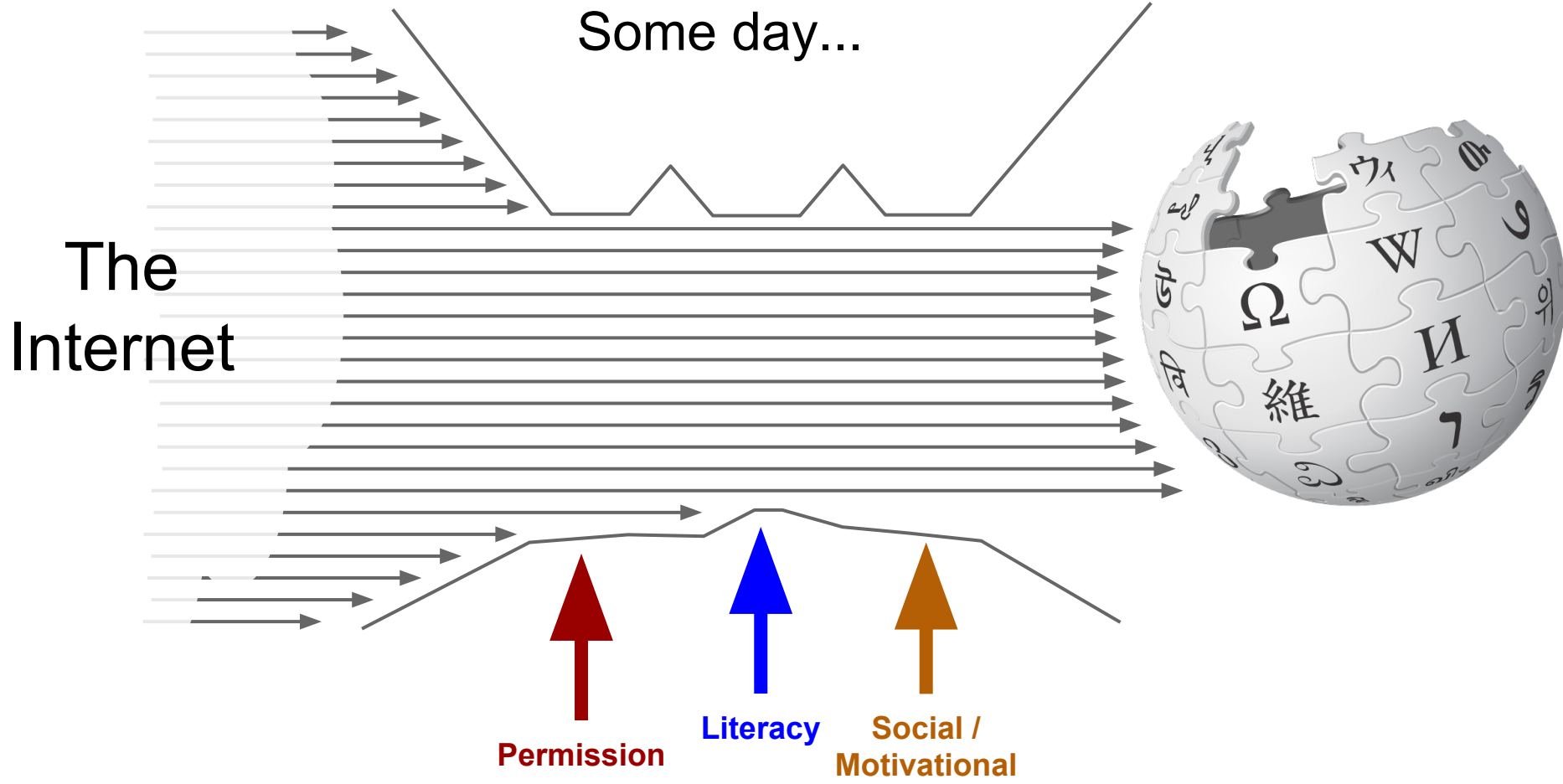


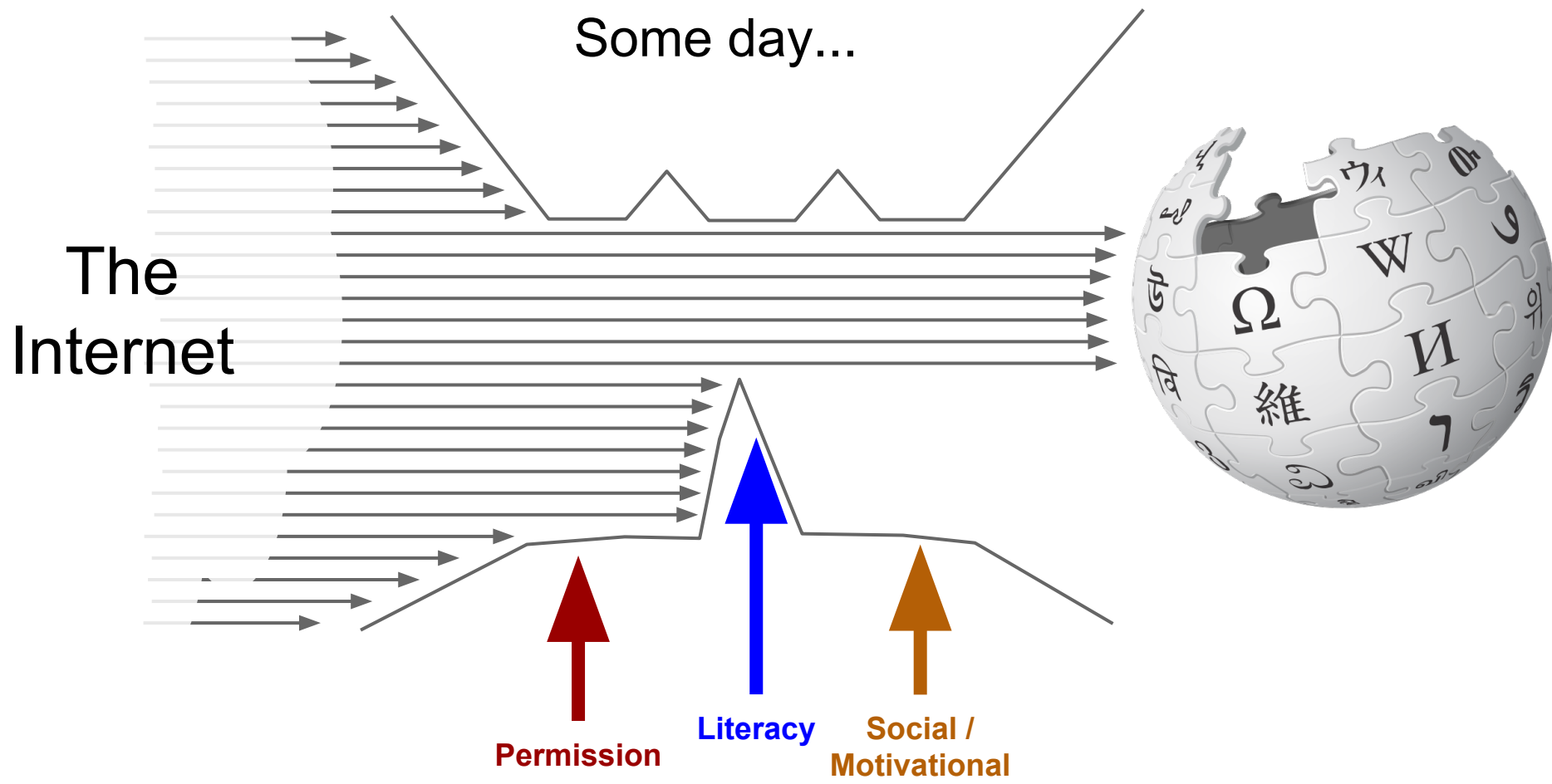


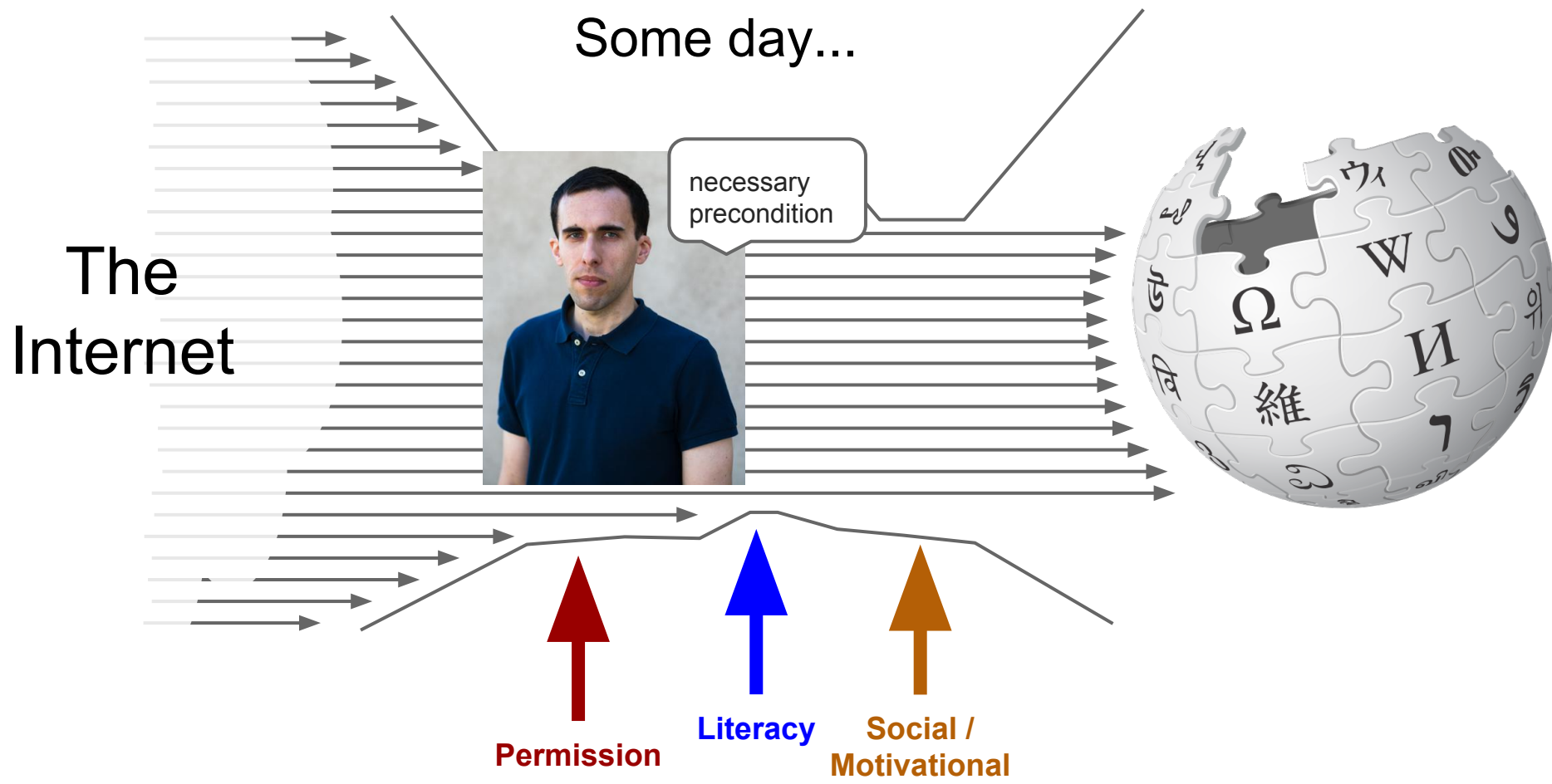












Thanks!

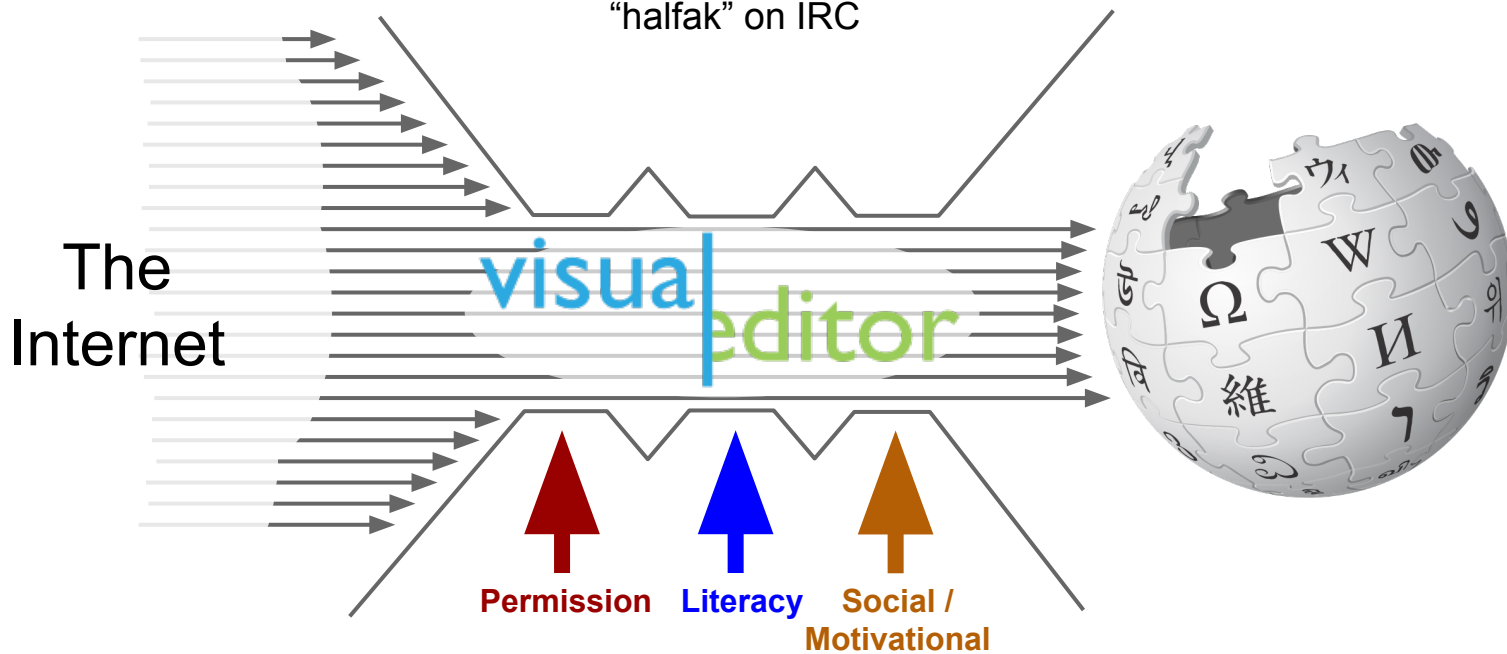
Aaron Halfaker

ahalfaker@wikimedia.org

[[User:EpochFail]]

[[User:Halfak (WMF)]]

“halfak” on IRC



Read more: [\[\[Research:VisualEditor's effect on newly registered editors\]\]](#)